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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 309
By DeBerry L

A RESOLUTION to direct the Select Joint Committee on Children and Youth to study methods of using the state's various programs serving children and youth to promote children's innate resilient characteristics to survive at-risk environments and traumatic events rather than only treating the personal and societal damage resulting from a child's succumbing to at-risk environment and trauma.

WHEREAS, many children grow up in circumstances of chronic poverty and parental substance abuse; and others experience family break-up or the trauma of personal or societal violence; and

WHEREAS, some children are able to transcend such unfavorable circumstances and mature into well-balanced and productive adults while others fall into delinquent behavior or emotional disturbance; and

WHEREAS, the successful children seem to possess an inner resiliency that enables them to make wise decisions, avoid dangerous activities and risky behavior, and choose positive lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, children manifesting this resiliency have substantially fewer problems with drugs, violence, sexual involvement, and depression, conditions which create a high societal cost to treat; and

WHEREAS, there have been promising recent efforts to identify and analyze those characteristics of resiliency which include external assets such as family and parental support

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and communication, boundaries established by parents in the home, positive peer influence, structured use of time, internal assets relating to motivation to achieve at school and at home, valuing others and concern for the larger community, and social competencies; and

WHEREAS, although many professionals who deal with children seek on their own to promote such characteristics, many state programs focus on treating individual, negative problems which result from the actions of children with dysfunctional problems rather than taking a preventative approach by promoting the development of personal assets; and

WHEREAS, nurturing relationships with parents, peers, neighbors, and other significant adults will contribute a great deal to facilitating successful instruction in school and surviving the rigors of growing up in at-risk circumstances; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That the Select Joint Committee on Children and Youth be directed to study methods by which the various state programs serving children and youth might promote those desirable innate resilient characteristics of children which will assist them to survive at-risk environment and traumatic events.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all appropriate agencies of state government shall provide assistance to the select joint committee, upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations to the One-Hundredth General Assembly no later than February 2, 1998.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution shall be furnished to the Commissioners of the Departments of Children's Services, Education, Health, Human Services, and Mental Health and Mental Retardation; and to the Executive Director of the Commission on Children and Youth.